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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/12/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EAID](#) [AM](#)
SUBJECT: CDA DISCUSSES PARLIAMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN
INTRODUCTORY CALL ON SPEAKER

Classified By: CDA R.V. Perina, reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) CDA's introductory courtesy call on National Assembly Chairman Tigran Torossian focused, after initial pleasantries, on the embassy's plans for a new phase of assistance to the newly-elected parliament. Torossian allowed that he had not been completely satisfied with the previous iteration of USAID assistance to the parliament, and he hoped the next iteration would correct this. CDA steered away from a detailed airing of past grievances, and expressed the hope that we could instead agree fully on the future direction. CDA left a non-paper listing our proposals, inviting the speaker to give us his feedback after he had had the opportunity to review and consider our thoughts. Torossian agreed. He also expressed his satisfaction that the recent parliamentary elections had been credited by international observers as much better than Armenia's past elections, and predicted the upcoming presidential election would be better still. He welcomed CDA to Armenia, and wished him a very successful stay. CDA expressed satisfaction at returning to Armenia, but reaffirmed the United States' commitment to appointing a permanent ambassador as soon as possible.

¶2. (C) COMMENT: The previous legislative strengthening program had been negotiated with Torossian's predecessor, and Torossian resented our unwillingness to tear up the workplan and start fresh when he ascended to the speaker's chair. We are now in the initial phases of working out the new program, and hope to minimize the tetchy Speaker's direct involvement. We welcomed Torossian's relatively realistic assessment of the conduct of the May 12 parliamentary elections and his commitment to further improve in time for the presidential poll.
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